

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DOHA 00036 111418Z

42

ACTION NEA-09

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USIA-06 EB-07 FEA-01 COME-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIEP-01

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P R 111330Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY DOHA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 85

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L DOHA 0036

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS : PFOR ENRG MPOL QA US XF

SUBJECT : QATARI OIL MINISTER'S COMMENTS ON SECRETARY'S

BUSINESS WEEK INTERVIEW AND LETTERS TO OIL

PRODUCERS

1. SUMMARY: QATARI OIL MINISTER HAS EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER SECRETARY'S BUSINESS WEEK INTERVIEW AND DISAPPOINTMENT OVER EXCLUSION OF GOQ FROM ADDRESSEES OF SECRETARY'S LETTERS ON PRODUCER/CONSUMER CONFERENCE.

2. DURING JAN 9 CONVERSATION, GOQ MINISTER OF FINANCE AND PETROLEUM SHAYKH ABDUL AZIZ BIN KHALIFA AL THANI RAISED SUBJECTS OF SECRETARY'S BUSINESS WEEK INTERVIEW AND LETTERS TO OIL PRODUCERS.

2. RE BUSINESS WEEK INTERVIEW, ABDUL AZIZ PREFACED HIS REMARKS BY SAYING GOQ ATTACHED GREATEST IMPORTANCE TO HARMONIOUS AND CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 DOHA 00036 111418Z

FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH US AND HE SPEAKING TO ME WITH A FRANK-

NESS POSSIBLE ONLY AMONG FRIENDS. HE SAID HE WAS DEEPLY CONCERNED BY SECRETARY'S REFERENCE IN A PUBLIC FORUM TO POSSIBLE US MILITARY INTERVENTION IN AREA. ACCORDING ABDUL AZIZ, IF ENERGY PROBLEMS HAD BECOME SO ACUTE AS TO PROMPT SUCH COMMENTS FROM SECRETARY, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN FAR BETTER TO DISCUSS PROBLEM CONFIDENTIALLY WITH PRODUCING COUNTRIES, INCLUDING QATAR. ABDUL AZIZ STATED THAT GOQ HAD SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED ISSUING STATEMENT CRITICAL OF BUSINESS WEEK INTERVIEW, BUT HAD DECIDED THAT THERE WAS NOTHING TO BE GAINED BY SUCH PUBLIC POSTURING, PRIMARILY BECAUSE IT COULD DAMAGE US/GOQ RELATIONS. HE OBSERVED THAT OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE AREA HAD NOT RPT NOT SHOWN SUCH RESTRAINT. AT SAME TIME, SAID ABDUL AZIZ, HE WANTED ME AND MY GOVERNMENT TO KNOW THAT SECRETARY'S REMARKS HAD CAUSED CONCERN HERE DESPITE GOQ'S PUBLIC SILENCE.

3. IN RESPONSE I COMMENDED ABDUL AZIZ FOR GOOD SENSE SHOWN BY GOQ IN FOLLOWING HIS OWN RECOMMENDATION THAT SUCH MATTERS SHOULD BE DISCUSSED OFFICIALLY AND IN PRIVATE. I TOLD HIM HIS VIEWS WOULD BE FULLY REPORTED TO THE DEPARTMENT. I URGED THAT HE READ THE FULL TEXT OF THE BUSINESS WEEK INTERVIEW (WHICH I HAVE PROVIDED) AND ALSO DREW ON APPROPRIATE GUIDANCE FROM RECENT DEPARTMENT TELEGRAMS ON THE SUBJECT. I REMINDED ABDUL AZIZ OF OUR FREQUENT CONVERSATIONS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CURRENT WORLD ECONOMIC DISLOCATIONS AND THE PROBLEM OF ASSURED OIL SUPPLY AT REASONABLE PRICES. I NOTED THAT THE SECRETARY HAD SPOKEN OFTEN ABOUT OUR DEEP CONCERN THAT THE ENERGY PROBLEM IN ALL ITS RAMIFICATIONS HAD HAD AN EXTREMELY DISRUPTIVE EFFECT ON THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMY, AND THIS DISRUPTION HAD REACHED THE POINT OF THREATENING POLITICAL INSTABILITY IN MANY COUNTRIES.

4. ABDUL AZIZ INSISTED THAT HE HAD TOLD ME REPEATEDLY THAT IT WAS NOT GOQ'S OR OTHER OIL PRODUCERS INTENTION TO BRING ECONOMIC RUIN TO WORLD. WHAT WAS REQUIRED, HE SAID, WAS A RATIONAL PRODUCER/CONSUMER DIALOGUE, AND THIS BROUGHT HIM TO HIS SECOND POINT. HE ASKED ABOUT THE SECRETARY'S LETTERS TO THE FIVE OIL PRODUCING COUNTRIES AND I EXPLAINED THAT THESE PERTAINED TO US VIEWS ON THE PROPOSED PRODUCER/CONSUMER CONFERENCE. ABDUL AZIZ SAID THAT OF COURSE SECRETARY COULD WRITE TO WHOM HE PLEASED, AND GOQ WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE INFOR D BY OTHER RECIPIENTS

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 DOHA 00036 111418Z

ABOUT SUBSTANCE OF LETTER. HOWEVER, ON OTHER HAND, GOQ KEENLY INTERESTED IN PRODUCER/CONSUMER MEETING AND US VIEWS ABOUT IT AND WOULD THEREFORE HAVE BEEN PLEASED TO HAVE BEEN INCLUDED IN SECRETARY'S LIST OF ADDRESSEES. ACCORDING TO ABDUL AZIZ, THIS GOQ DESIRE WAS ANOTHER MEASURE OF ITS REGARD FOR ITS RELATIONS WITH US AND IMPORTANCE OF KEEPING THEM CLOSE AND ON EVEN KEEL.

5. I REPLIED THAT I APPRECIATED ABDUL AZIZ'S FRANK COMMENTS, AND THAT US REGARD FOR ITS RELATIONS WITH GOQ EVIDENCED BY OUR EXPANDED PRESENCE IN QATAR, AND CONVERSATIONS SUCH AS THIS.

6. COMMENT: IT APPEARS THAT GOQ WILL CONTINUE TO HOLD ITS PEACE ON BUSINESS WEEK INTERVIEW ALTHOUGH IT HAS CAUSED QATARIS CONSIDERABLE CONCERN. ABDUL AZIZ IS THE SECOND SENIOR GOQ OFFICIAL TO EXPRESS DISAPPOINTMENT ABOUT THE EXCLUSION OF GOQ FROM ADDRESSEES OF SECRETARY'S LETTER. I HOPE WE CAN DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS DISAPPOINTMENT (DOHA 21).

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